

**TOWN OF NEEDHAM
CONSERVATION COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
Thursday, February 7, 2019**

LOCATION: Public Services Administration Building (PSAB), Charles River Room

ATTENDING: Janet Carter Bernardo (Chair), Sue Barber, William Murphy, Peter Oehlkers, Alison Richardson (arrived at 7:34pm), Debbie Anderson (Director of Conservation), Elisa Litchman (Administrative Assistant).

GUESTS: Anusha Datar, Philip Hershberg, Tim Hood, Adam Novotry, John Rockwood, Diane Simonelli.

J. Carter Bernardo opened the public meeting at 7:30 p.m.

MINUTES:

Motion to approve the minutes, as amended, from January 24, 2019 by W. Murphy, seconded by S. Barber, 3-0-1 (P. Oehlkers abstained).

HEARINGS:

823 CHARLES RIVER STREET (DEP FILE #234-8XX)

J. Carter Bernardo opened the public hearing at 7:45pm.

J. Rockwood from EcoTec presented the project. He stated that the Order of Conditions had been Amended twice but none of the proposed work ever took place and the Certificate of Compliance Request was submitted to close out the permit.

The owners have filed for a Permit to do a similar project as the original that was proposed. The proposed work includes removing a single family house, garage, retaining wall, and patio. The applicant intends to investigate an old septic system appropriately. Discussion about what that exactly means and J. Rockwood stated that they usually crush the tank in place. J. Bernardo asked if the pipes would be removed as there is concern about the distribution box and tank; W. Murphy stated that the tank should be pumped out and crushed and the pipes should remain. J. Rockwood stated that the existing driveway would remain.

The existing limit of lawn is proposed to be brought up to grade. The applicant proposes to seed it with a meadow mix. They would like the ability to have a small garden where it was located previously. The applicant understands what it means to have a meadow and would only mow the meadow once per year after August 15th. The proposal includes installing bounds along the 25' no disturb zone. The plan shows an existing approximately 600 square foot mitigation planting area which they intend to keep. The applicants had done work without a permit in the past and in

order to restore the habitat value, a mitigation planting area will be installed. The sewer line is expected to be cut and capped at the road.

Motion to continue the public hearing for 823 Charles River Street (DEP File #234-8XX), for a DEP File #, to February 28, 2019 at 8:00pm by W. Murphy, seconded by S. Barber, approved 5-0-0.

0 GREAT PLAIN AVENUE/25 GREEN STREET (DEP FILE #234-826) – NOTICE OF INTENT

J. Bernardo opened the public hearing at 8:00pm.

D. Simonelli of Field Resources explained that the Notice of Intent had been submitted for the replacement of a footbridge and tree removal. Since the submittal, the Needham Golf Club has decided to amend the submittal for a permit for the bridge replacement and not the tree removal; D. Simonelli stated that the applicant would apply for an amendment at a later time to discuss the trees they wish to remove and an invasive plant removal program.

J. Carter Bernardo stated for the record that she is a member of the Needham Golf Club, but this has no bearing on her involvement with the Commission or regarding the decisions made by the Commission. Tim Hood, the caretaker of the NGC was present as well. He will be overseeing the project. The proposed work includes using the existing footings and replacing the surface of the bridge. The proposed bridge is slightly larger than the existing. D. Simonelli explained that the materials would be brought in on palettes daily so that nothing would be staged at the site. The bridge will have a steel beam support. Cinderblocks will be installed for support and the bridge will be covered with a stone façade. Erosion controls of silt fence are proposed around the bridge area during the work.

J. Carter Bernardo asked the applicant how long he anticipates the work will take. T. Hood stated maybe a week. A. Richardson asked for clarification of the drawings presented since they were not clear as to what the surface would look like and the shape the bridge would be.

J. Bernardo stated that when the applicant does apply for tree removal, they should keep in mind the 25-foot No Disturbance Buffer and the requirement for 2:1 replacement of live trees.

Motion to close the public hearing for 0 Great Plain Avenue/25 Green Street (DEP File #234-826) by S. Barber, seconded by A. Richardson, approved 5-0-0.

Motion to issue the Order of Conditions for 0 Great Plain Avenue/25 Green Street (DEP File #234-826) as amended by W. Murphy, seconded by S. Barber, approved 5-0-0.

OTHER BUSINESS:

823 CHARLES RIVER STREET (DEP File #234-541) – REQUEST FOR CERTIFICATE OF COMPLIANCE

J. Rockwood from EcoTec explained that the applicants had never done any of the work originally permitted by the Conservation Commission back in 2011. The applicant needs to close out the permit before any new Order of Conditions is issued.

Motion to issue a Certificate of Compliance for 823 Charles River Street (DEP File #234-541) by S. Barber, seconded by W. Murphy, approved 5-0-0).

VARIOUS UPDATES

CONSERVATION SPECIALIST POSITION:

D. Anderson updated the Commission on the search for a new Conservation Specialist and that the job had been posted and the Town received 85 applications. D. Anderson will meet with Lee Newman, Director of Planning & Community Development to review the applications. D. Anderson will coordinate and compile an interview team for this search process.

SUNITA WILLIAMS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

D. Anderson updated the Commission that she and Hank Haff, Town Project Manager for the Sunita Williams School went for a site visit to the school the day prior, 2/6/2019. The plantings are installed. D. Anderson mentioned that there is a good amount of beaver activity in the area of the student education trail at the back of the school. She expressed excitement regarding the dynamic ecosystem. With all of the beaver activity, D. Anderson suggested that H. Haff contact her if there is any concern about hazard trees. She also mentioned that there were about 25 wild turkeys in the area while she visited.

P. Oehlkers commented that due to this project there have been many displaced barn swallows. He asked if there could be some accommodations made for them. D. Anderson stated that the PTC of the Hillside School (soon to be Sunita Williams School) will begin working with the students to construct the required blue bird boxes for installation.

D. Anderson also shared that a turtle nesting area will be constructed adjacent to the “student science pond”. H. Haff hopes to request a partial Certificate of Compliance sometime in June.

1407 CENTRAL AVENUE – DPW STORAGE FACILITY

D. Anderson stated that she would be going to the site tomorrow for a pre-construction meeting with the contractor, Gary Charett of Seaver Construction, and Town Project Manager, Stephen Gentile.

GRANT LETTER

Tim McDonald, Director of Health & Human Services for the Town of Needham had sent D. Anderson an email regarding an Executive Office of Energy & Environmental Affairs Grant Announcement. The attachments include the Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Grant Program for which HHS is applying. T. McDonald has requested that the Conservation Commission consider signing a letter to include with their application that states what the

Commission's purpose is, how the Commission identifies risks and changes to the environment, and how they can protect Needham's environment. The Commission's signatures demonstrate its plan to prioritize resiliency, and provide support and knowledge for future projects.

The Commission agreed to sign the letter.

VISTING LECTURES/TALKS FOR NEEDHAM RESIDENTS

D. Anderson mentioned that she is a member of a committee comprised of various staff from different Town departments to discuss and share educational opportunities for the public. This group has provided an opportunity for her to share information with others and work together so that she has some contacts outside of the Town for potential visiting speakers.

PUDDLESTOMPERS REQUEST

D. Anderson told the Commission that she had received a letter from the Puddlestompers organization requesting use of Ridge Hill trails and field for their programs for four to nine children from 2-5 year olds with adults over the course of four dates for approximately an hour per trip. D. Anderson had shared the information with P. Carey, Director of Park & Recreation. She told D. Anderson that Dave Davison requires insurance to hold this type of program. J. Carter Bernardo stated that the Commission encourages education programs at Ridge Hill for the hands-on experience.

SOUTHFIELD COURT POND UPDATE

SOLitude Lake Management submitted to the Conservation Commission a 2018 Aquatic Management Summary Report regarding Southfield Court Pond. The report also includes recommendations for 2019. Photos of the pond from April (pre-treatment) and then in September (post-treatment) showed significant improvement to the pond. The Commissioners commented how helpful and informative it is to receive these reports.

ADJOURN:

Motion to adjourn by W. Murphy, seconded by S. Barber, approved 5-0-0. The meeting was adjourned at 8:29pm.

NEXT PUBLIC MEETING:

February 28, 2019 at 7:30 p.m. in the Public Services Administration Building, Charles River Room.

February 7, 2019